V.B.2.N.?. PARONYCHIA SESSILIFLORA HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE [PROVISIONAL]

Nailwort Herbaceous Vegetation Alliance

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Nailwort Herbaceous Vegetation

ELEMENT CONCEPT

GLOBAL SUMMARY: Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

USFWS Wetland System: Upland

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Environment: This community occupies a shallow, northwest-facing (294^{o}) scrape, covering approximately 0.25 hectare on a moderate slope of approximately 6%. The scrape was sufficiently deep to remove the topsoil, a dark gray layer supporting *Festuca arizonica* grassland around the disturbed site. The depth of the scrape ranged from a few centimeters to approximately 1m deep, and it contained fossilized tree fragments, broken pieces of shale, and crushed granite, in addition to gravelly soil.

Global Environment: Not applicable

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Vegetation: The nailwort community is sparse, with approximately 10% vegetative cover. It is a collection of native, pioneering plants growing from coarse gravel subsoil exposed by excavation a number of years ago. It is unique, representing the only example of this land-use type observed, and it may provide a key to succession in similar areas for the most pioneering forb, dwarf-shrub, grass, and tree species. A few small *Pinus ponderosa* trees are present along with *Ericameria parryi, Artemisia frigida,* and *Gutierrezia sarothrae* dwarf-shrubs scattered across the scrape. The cespitose plants *Paronychia sessiliflora, Hymenoxys richardsonii, Cryptantha thyrsiflora,* and *Antennaria* sp. were scattered but common across the site. The grasses *Festuca arizonica, Koeleria macrantha, Elymus elymoides,* and *Bouteloua gracilis* were also present, but sparse. All of the dwarf-shrubs, forbs, and bunch grasses exhibit pedestaling, an indication of on-going erosion from the site, principally from raindrop splash and sheet run-off.

The aerial photo signature is white, from reflectance off of exposed soil.

Global Vegetation: Not applicable

Global Dynamics: Not applicable

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Stratum	Species
Dwarf-shrub	*Ericameria parryi*
Forb	*Paronychia sessiliflora, Hymenoxys richardsonii, Oxytropis splendens*
Graminoid	*Festuca arizonica*

Global

Stratum	Species

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Stratum	Species
Forb	*Paronychia sessiliflora, Hymenoxys richardsonii, Oxytropis splendens*
Graminoid	*Festuca arizonica*
Dwarf-shrub	*Ericameria parryi*
Tree	*Pinus ponderosa*

Global
Stratum **Species**

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM

Global
Stratum **Species**

GLOBAL SIMILAR ASSOCIATIONS:

GLOBAL STATUS AND CLASSIFICATION COMMENTS

Global Conservation Status Rank:

Global Classification Comments:

ELEMENT DISTRIBUTION

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Range: The nailwort community was found on only one site, in close proximity to the water pipeline corridor, west of CR1. A shallow scrape that had been excavated historically was present, presumably in a search to find fossil rocks, possibly to remove a fossil trunk, or simply a gravel borrow pit.

Global Range: Not applicable

Nations:
States/Provinces:

ELEMENT SOURCES

Florissant Fossil Beds NM Inventory Notes: Plot 21
Classification Confidence: **Identifier:** Not determined.
REFERENCES: